

PERSONAL MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN N. SEGUIN,

FROM THE YEAR 1834

TO THE

RETREAT OF GENERAL WOLL

FROM

THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

IN

842.

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## PREFACE.

A native of the City of San Antonio de Bexar, I embraced the cause of Texas at the report of the first cannon which foretold her liberty; filled an honorable situation in the ranks of the conquerors of San Jacinto, and was a member of the legislative body of the Republic. I now find myself, in the very land, which in other times bestowed on me such bright and repeated evidences of trust and esteem, exposed to the attacks of scribblers and personal enemies, who, to serve *political purposes*, and engender strife, falsify historical facts, with which they are but imperfectly acquainted. I owe it to myself, my children and friends, to answer them with a short, but true exposition of my acts, from the beginning of my public career, to the time of the return of General Woll from the Rio Grande, with the Mexican forces, amongst which I was then serving.

I address myself to the American people; to that people impetuous, as the whirlwind, when aroused by the hypocritical clamors of designing men, but just, impartial and composed, whenever men and facts are submitted to their judgment.

I have been the object of the hatred and passionate attacks of some few disorganisers, who, for a time, ruled, as masters, over the poor and oppressed population of San Antonio. Harpy-like, ready to pounce on every thing that attracted the notice of their rapacious avarice, it was an obstacle to the execution of their vile designs. They therefore, leagued together to exasperate and ruin me; spread against me malignant calumnies, and made use of odious

machinations to sully my honor, and tarnish my well earned reputation.

A victim to the wickedness of a few men, whose imposture was favored by their origin, and recent domination over the country; a foreigner in my native land; could I be expected stoically to endure their outrages and insults? Crushed by sorrow, convinced that my death alone would satisfy my enemies, I sought for a shelter amongst those against whom I had fought; I separated from my country, parents, family, relatives and friends, and what was more, from the institutions, on behalf of which I had drawn my sword, with an earnest wish to see Texas free and happy.

In that involuntary exile, my only ambition was to devote my time, far from the tumult of war, to the support of my family, who shared in my sad condition.

Fate, however, had not exhausted its cup of bitterness. Thrown into a prison, in a foreign country, I had no alternative left, but, to linger in a loathsome confinement, or to accept military service. On one hand, my wife and children, reduced to beggary, and separated from me; on the other hand, to turn my arms against my own country. The alternative was sad, the struggle of feelings violent; at last the father triumphed over the citizen; I seized a sword that galled my hand. (Who amongst my readers will not understand my situation?) I served Mexico; I served her loyally and faithfully; I was compelled to fight my own countrymen, but I was never guilty of the barbarous and unworthy deeds of which I am accused by my enemies.

Ere the tomb closes over me and my coteremporaries, I wish to lay open to publicity this stormy period of my life; I do it for friends as well as for my enemies, I challenge the latter to contest, with facts, the statements I am about to make, and I leave the decision unhesitatingly to the witnesses of the events.

## MEMOIRS, &c.

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In October 1834, I was Political Chief of the Department of Bejar. Dissatisfied with the reactionary designs of General Santa Anna, who was at that time President of the Republic of Mexico, and endeavored to overthrow the Federal system, I issued a circular, in which I urged every Municipality in Texas to appoint delegates to a convention that was to meet at San Antonio, for the purpose of taking into consideration the impending dangers, and for devising the means to avert them.

All the Municipalities appointed their delegates, but the convention never met, the General Government having ordered Col. José Maria Mendoza to march with his forces from Matamoras to San Antonio, and prevent the meeting of the delegates. The proofs of the above facts exist in the archives of the County of Bejar.

In April 1835, the Governor of Coahuila and Texas called for assistance from the various Departments, to resist the aggressions of Santa Anna against that State. I volunteered my services, and received from the Political Chief, Don Angel Navarro, the command of a party of National Guards, sent from San Antonio to Monclova. In our encounters with the troops of Santa Anna, I was efficiently assisted by Col. B. R. Milam and Maj. John R. Allen. On

our withdrawal from Monclova, disgusted with the weakness of the Executive, who had given up the struggle, we pledged ourselves to use all our influence to rouse Texas against the tyrannical government of Santa Anna.

We returned to San Antonio in the beginning of June. The Military Commander, Col. Domingo Ugartechea, considering me opposed to the existing government, ordered two officers to watch secretly my motions. This, however, did not prevent me from working diligently to prepare for the intended movement.

We had agreed that the movement should begin in the center of Texas, but, not hearing from that quarter, I determined to send an agent to Brazoria, Juan A. Zambrano, with directions to sound the disposition of the people. On the return of the agent, we were apprized that there was a great deal of talk about a revolution, in public meetings, but that the moment for an armed movement was still remote. Our agent was sent to Victoria, and he there called a meeting of the citizens, but the Military Commander of Goliad sent down a detachment of troops to prevent the assembly and arrest the promoters.

We were despairing of a successful issue, when the Military Commander of Texas, informed of the revolutionary feelings which were spreading over the colonies, determined upon removing from the town of Gonzales a piece of artillery, lent to that Corporation by the Political Chief Saucedo. This was at the time a delicate undertaking. A lieutenant was detailed to carry it into execution, with orders to use force if necessary. On the same day that the military detachment started for Gonzales, I went to the lower ranchos on the San Antonio River; at Salvador Flores I held a meeting of the neighbors, and induced several to take up arms, well satisfied that the beginning of the revolution was close at hand. The officer sent to Gonzales



met some resistance at the "Perra," and thought it prudent to beat a hasty retreat. Col. Ugartechea was making preparations to proceed in person towards Gonzales, with a respectable force, when he received orders from Gen. Cos to await his arrival.

A few days after the entry of Gen. Cos into San Antonio, Major Collinsworth, surprising the garrison of Goliad, took possession of that place. So soon as I was informed of that circumstance, I marched with my company to reinforce the Major, but, at the "Conquista" crossing on the San Antonio River, I was overtaken by an express from General Stephen F. Austin, who informed me that he was marching on San Antonio, and requested me to join him, in order to attack General Cos. I retraced my steps, after having requested Captain Manuel Flores to go and meet General Austin and inform him of my readiness to comply with his wishes, and that I would take with me all the men I could possibly enlist on my route.

On the 13th of October, I met Austin on the Salado, at the crossing of the Gonzales road, and joined my forces with his small army. Upon this occasion I had the honor to become acquainted with General Sam Houston, who accompanied Austin. On the same day we had a slight encounter with the forces under Cos, who retired into San Antonio. Austin, as Commander-in-Chief of the army, gave me the appointment of Captain.

I was commanded to accompany Col. Bowie to the Mission of San José, with my company, with orders to approach the city as nearly as possible, following the banks of the river. We arrived, on the evening of the 21st of November, at the Mission of Concepcion, and noticing that we had been observed by the scouts of Gen. Cos, passed the night in making preparations to resist an attack which we considered imminent. We were not deceived; on the

morning of the 22d a force was seen moving along the road from San Antonio to the Mission. A few men, sent by Bowie to reconnoitre, made such a rash charge, that they were cut off from their line of retreat, and had to shut themselves up in the steeple of the church, where they remained during the action. The day was soon ours; the enemy retreating, with the loss of one piece of artillery.

I was detailed to forage for the army, and was successful in doing so, returning to the camp with a liberal supply of provisions. Our camp was shortly moved to within one mile of the Alamo, whence we proceeded to the "Molino Blanco," and established head-quarters. On the 11th of December we entered the city, and after having taken possession of the houses of the Curate Garza, Vera-mendi, Garza, Flores, and others, we obliged the enemy to capitulate and withdraw towards Laredo.

After the capture of San Antonio, Captain Travis' company and mine were detailed to go in pursuit of the Mexican forces, and capture from them a cavallado which they had in the Pajita, Laredo road; we succeeded, taking nearly one hundred head of horses, which were sent to San Felipe de Austin, for the benefit of the public service. I was afterwards detailed to the ranchos on the San Antonio river, to see if I could find more horses belonging to the Mexican troops.

On the 2d of January, 1836, I received from the Provisional Government the commission of Captain of Regular Cavalry, with orders to report to Lieutenant-Colonel Travis in San Antonio.

On the 22d of February, at 2 o'clock p. m., General Santa Anna took possession of the city, with over 4000 men, and in the mean time we fell back on the Alamo.

On the 28th, the enemy commenced the bombardment, meanwhile we met in a Council of War, and taking

into consideration our perilous situation, it was resolved by a majority of the council, that I should leave the fort, and proceed with a communication to Colonel Fannin, requesting him to come to our assistance. I left the Alamo on the night of the council; on the following day I met, at the Ranch of San Bartolo, on the Cibolo, Captain Desac, who, by orders of Fannin, had foraged on my ranch, carrying off a great number of beeves, corn, &c. Desac informed me that Fannin could not delay more than two days his arrival at the Cibolo, on his way to render assistance to the defenders of the Alamo. I therefore determined to wait for him. I sent Fannin, by express, the communication from Travis, informing him at the same time of the critical position of the defenders of the Alamo. Fannin answered me, through Lieutenant Finley, that he had advanced as far as "Rancho Nuevo," but, being informed of the movements of General Urrea, he had countermarched to Goliad, to defend that place; adding, that he could not respond to Travis' call, their respective commands being separate, and depending upon General Houston, then at Gonzales, with whom he advised me to communicate. I lost no time in repairing to Gonzales, and reported myself to the General, informing him of the purpose of my mission. He commanded me to wait at Gonzales for further orders. General Houston ordered Captain Salvador Flores with 25 men of my company to the lower ranchos on the San Antonio river, to protect the inhabitants from the depredations of the Indians.

Afterwards, I was ordered to take possession, with the balance of my company, of the "Perra," distant about four miles on the road to San Antonio, with instructions to report every evening at head-quarters. Thus my company was forming the vanguard of the Texan army, on the road to San Antonio.



On the 6th of March, I received orders to go to San Antonio with my company and a party of American citizens, carrying, on the horses, provisions for the defenders of the Alamo.

Arrived at the Cibolo, and not hearing the signal gun which was to be discharged every fifteen minutes, as long as the place held out, we retraced our steps to convey to the General-in-Chief the sad tidings. A new party was sent out, which soon came back, having met with Anselmo Vergara and Andres Barcena, both soldiers of my company, whom I had left for purposes of observation in the vicinity of San Antonio; they brought the intelligence of the fall of the Alamo. Their report was so circumstantial as to preclude any doubts about that disastrous event.

The Texan army began its retreat towards the centre of the country. I was put in command of the rear-guard, with orders not to leave any families behind. I continued covering the rear-guard, until we had crossed the Arenoso creek, near the Brazos, where I was, by orders of the General, detached with Captain Mosley Baker, to the town of San Felipe de Austin, to cut off the enemy from the passage of the river. We remained in that position, and within sight of the Brigade of General Ramirez, who occupied San Felipe. I was subsequently ordered to occupy with my company Gross' house, farther up the river. Our main army was then encamped in the bottom of the Paloma or Molino Creek, on the Western bank of the Brazos River, where it remained until information was received that the enemy had crossed the river at Fort Bend, and was marching towards Harrisburg. Our army began at once to cross the river, on board the steamer Yellow Stone, and when the whole force had crossed, took up the march, with the intention of harassing the enemy's rear-guard.

The army was taking its noon rest, near Buffalo Bayou,

when two soldiers of my company, who had gone out to water horses, reported that they had seen three Mexicans riding at full speed over the prairie. Without delay, I advised the General, who immediately sent Captains Karnes and ——— in pursuit. These officers returned shortly, bringing as prisoners a captain, a citizen, and an express bearer of despatches from Mexico to the enemy.

We were apprised by the prisoners that Santa Anna was at Harrisburg with 800 men, and a perusal of their papers made us acquainted with the fact that Cos was to bring him reinforcements. To prevent the concentration of forces, General Sam Houston gave the order to resume the march. The army, artillery, and train, crossed over Buffalo Bayou on rafts, during which operation, General Rusk, then Secretary of War, did not spare his personal labor. It was dark when the crossing was effected. In the course of the night we passed through Harrisburg, the ruins of which were still smoking, having been set on fire by the enemy. We continued our march all night. At daybreak a man was taken prisoner, who, on discovering us, had attempted to escape. He was a printer belonging to San Felipe, and informed us that the enemy were at a distance of about 8 miles, on the way back to Harrisburg. Our scouts came in soon with the information that the enemy were countermarching towards Buffalo Bayou.

Conscious of the starving condition of the troops, who had not eaten for twenty-four hours, General Houston resolved on camping, in a small mott, contiguous to the San Jacinto River.

We were beginning to cook our meal, when the enemy showed themselves close to us. We rushed to arms, and formed in line of battle. On their nearer approach we were ordered to lay down on the ground, thus concealing ourselves in the grass. A height, adjacent to our position,

was soon occupied by the enemy, upon which, the General ordered the band to strike up "Will you come to the bower." The enemy answered with its artillery, and we joined the chorus with a brisk musketry. We were soon charged by a skirmishing party on foot, detached from the right wing of the enemy; they were quickly driven back by a party of our cavalry, supported by the artillery. The enemy kept up their fire until they had selected a camping ground, distant about 400 steps from ours, and protected by two motts. Both armies ceased firing; we resumed the cooking of our meal, composed of meat only, but had the good fortune to capture a boat loaded with provisions, which afforded some seasoning to a repast that otherwise would have been rather scanty.

On the same evening General Lamar went out with a party of Cavalry, to draw the enemy into a fight; the result was a slight skirmish, ending in the wounding of two or three on each side.

On the morning of the 21st of April, General Houston, for the purpose of cutting off the communication of General Cos' forces with those of Santa Anna, ordered deaf Smith to burn the bridge over the river, but, on reaching it, he saw that he had come too late, the enemy's reinforcements had already crossed. However, the bridge was destroyed, and Smith returned to our camp at the very moment when Cos united with Santa Anna.

At noon, General Rusk came to partake of dinner in my tent. When he had done eating, he asked me if the Mexicans were not in the habit of taking a siesta at that hour. I answered in the affirmative, adding, moreover, that in such cases they kept under arms their main and advanced guards, with a line of sentinels. General Rusk observed that he thought so; however, the moment seemed to him favorable to attack the enemy, and he further said:

"Do you feel like fighting?" I answered that I was always ready and willing to fight, upon which the General rose, saying: "Well, let us go!" I made at once my dispositions, the General proceeded along the line, speaking to the Captains, and our force was soon under arms. Generals Houston and Rusk delivered short addresses, and we formed into line of battle in front of the enemy. My company was in the left wing, under Colonel Sherman. We marched onward on the prairie, and were met by a column of infantry, which we drove back briskly. Before falling in with that column, we had dispersed an ambuscade that had opened their fire against us within pistol shot. The whole enemy's line, panic struck, took to flight. We were already on the bank of the river, in pursuit of the fugitives, when my attention was called to a Mexican officer, who, emerging from the river where he had kept himself concealed, gave himself up and requested me to spare his life. Being sheltered by weeds and grass, he seemed afraid to leave his retreat, owing to the fire which was kept up against the fugitives. I ordered those who were close to me to cease firing, which order was extended along the line to a considerable distance. Then, the officer who had addressed me came out, followed by Colonels Bringas, Almonte, Dias, and quite a number of other officers.

On my way to the camp with the prisoners, an officer, named Sanchez, conducted me to a place where \$25,000 had been concealed. I reached the camp at dark, presented my prisoners to the General, who congratulated me, and I reported to him the discovery of the money. Colonel Forbes was at once detailed to go and bring it in.

On this great and glorious day my company was conspicuous for efficiency and gallantry; however, we did not lose one single man, to the surprise of those who had witnessed our honorable and perilous situation.

Two days after the capture of Santa Anna, and four days after the battle, Captain Karnes and myself were detailed with our companies to observe the retreat of the remains of the Mexican army. We overtook their rear-guard at the "Contrabando" marsh, where some of their wagons had broken down. As soon as the escort saw us they took to flight, leaving the whole property in our possession.

Gen. Ampudia sent me a communication requesting me to attend to the sick and wounded whom he had left behind.

We crossed the Colorado at the heels of the enemy, and after proceeding a short distance, we met General Well, who was bearer of a safe conduct. We camped every night on the ground abandoned each morning by the enemy, until we reached Victoria, which had been already evacuated by them. Shortly afterwards Colonel Sherman arrived, in command of the vanguard of our army, and subsequently General Rusk, then Commander-in-Chief, who established his headquarters in that town.

On the 30th of May, I received from the General-in-Chief my promotion to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of the Texan army, and was ordered to take possession of San Antonio. I left Victoria on the 1st of June, and, on the Cabeza creek, met General Andrade, who was retreating towards Matamoras.

Agreeably to his instructions, I sent to that General a communication, informing him that my orders were to take possession of San Antonio. His answer was that the place was occupied by Captain Castañeda, who was instructed to surrender it to the first Texan officer who should come to demand it.

I took possession of San Antonio on the 4th of June; on the 10th, Colonel Smith came to occupy it with the regiment of Mississippi Mounted Volunteers; on the 24th



I received orders to fall back with my command to headquarters at Victoria, information having been received that the Mexican army was marching from Matamoras to Texas.

When we were convinced of the falseness of that report, I applied to the General for leave to go to Nacogdoches on a visit to my family, then in that town on their return from the Sabine, where they had sought a refuge from the Mexican army. My application was favorably received, and leave of absence for twenty-two days granted to me.

I found all the members of my family sick with fever, and the disease did not spare me, but compelled me to exceed the term of my leave. General Houston, who was then at Nacogdoches, getting cured of the wounds he received at San Jacinto, gave me a certificate stating the causes of my delay in returning to my post. I left Nacogdoches on the 20th of August, and on my passage through Columbus I received, from the Secretary of War, orders to report myself to the President for instructions.

I arrived at Velasco on the 10th of September; on the next day the President handed to me my commission of Lieutenant-Colonel, appointing me to the command of the City of San Antonio, with orders to proceed to my destination without delay.

I arrived at head-quarters, at Lavaca, on the 15th of the same month, and reported to General Rusk, who ordered me to begin recruiting my regiment in that town.

On the 11th of October I left head-quarters, with my regiment dismounted, and with instructions to procure horses in San Antonio, where I arrived on the 17th.

1837. In March, being in command of San Antonio, I received orders from General Felix Houston to destroy that city and transfer its inhabitants to the east bank of the Brazos. At the same time, Lieutenant-Colonel Switzer of

the Volunteers came, with instructions to assist me in carrying out the order. Considering the measure premature and unjust, I took upon myself the responsibility of disobeying the order, until I had referred the matter to the President, with whom I made use of all my influence to have the order rescinded. The President prevailed upon General Houston to do so; I thus averted the impending destruction of San Antonio, but, in consequence, made Gen. F. Houston my bitter enemy.

As I had received neither funds nor stores for the subsistence of my command, I was compelled to make requisitions upon the citizens for corn and beads. At this time, Don José Antonio Navarro delivered to me, for that object, goods to over the amount of \$3000.

In April, I received orders to seize upon the horses of the citizens of San Antonio, to mount my command. I was instructed to act with "discernment" in the discharge of this duty, but, however prudent I might be, I could not avoid creating a good deal of dissatisfaction, and several complaints were transmitted to the Government.

1838. In March, on obtaining a leave of absence for three months, to go to New Orleans, I turned over the command of San Antonio to Colonel Karnes. On my return, I was apprized that my fellow-citizens had done me the honor to elect me as Senator to Congress. During my term, I was appointed as Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs. At the expiration of my term as Senator, I was elected Mayor of the City of San Antonio.

Here I must digress from my narrative, to call attention to the situation of my family in those times that tried the stoutest hearts.

No sooner was General Cos informed that I had taken an active part in the revolution, than he removed my father from the office of Postmaster, which he had filled

for several years. He forced him to leave San Antonio at once, and he had consequently to walk the thirty-three miles which separated him from his rancho, where my family were living. Such was the hurry with which he was compelled to depart, that he was obliged to leave his family, who remained exposed to our fire during the whole siege.

When we received intelligence from our spies on the Rio Grande, that Santa Anna was preparing to invade Texas, my father, with his, my own, and several other families, removed toward the centre of the country.

My family took with them above three thousand head of sheep. They had reached Gonzales when Santa Anna took possession of San Antonio, and as soon as some other families joined them, they proceeded towards the Colorado, via Columbus. On their arrival at San Felipe de Austin, the citizens of that place, terror struck at the sight of the hurried flight of such a number of families, endeavored to take the advance. The confusion and delay caused on the road by that immense straggling column of fugitives were such, that when my family were beginning to cross the Colorado with their cattle, the enemy was at their heels. General Ramirez y Lesma did not fail to take hold of that rich booty, and the shepherds only escaped by swimming over the river. The loss to three of the families was very severe, nay, irretrievable. They did not stop on their flight, until they reached the town of San Augustine, east of Nacogdoches. When the families received the welcome tidings of the victory of San Jacinto, they went to Nacogdoches. There, all the members of my family, without excepting a single person, were attacked by fever. Thus, prostrated on their couches, deprived of all resources, they had to struggle in the midst of their sufferings, to assist one another. Want of money compelled them to part, little by

little, with their valuables and articles of clothing. A son, an uncle, and several more remote relatives of mine fell victims to the disease. Seeing that the fever did not abate, the families determined upon moving towards the interior.

The train presented a spectacle which defied description. Old men and children were lying in wagons, and for several days, Captain Menchaca, who was the only person able to stand up, had to drive the whole train, as well as attend to the sick.

The families reached San Antonio at last. There was not one of them who had not to lament the loss of a relative, and to crown their misfortunes, they found their houses in ruins, their fields laid waste, and their cattle destroyed or dispersed.

I, myself, found my ranch despoiled; what little was spared by the retreating enemy, had been wasted by our own army; ruin and misery met me on my return to my unpretending home.

But let me draw a veil over those past and sorrowful days, and resume my narrative.

The tokens of esteem, and evidences of trust and confidence, repeatedly bestowed upon me by the Supreme Magistrate, General Rusk, and other dignitaries of the Republic, could not fail to arouse against me much invidious and malignant feeling. The jealousy evinced against me by several officers of the companies recently arrived at San Antonio, from the United States, soon spread amongst the American straggling adventurers, who were already beginning to work their dark intrigues against the native families, whose only crime was, that they owned large tracts of land and desirable property.

John W. Smith, a bitter enemy of several of the richest families of San Antonio, by whom he had been covered with favors, joined the conspiracy which was organized to ruin me.

I will also point out the origin of another enmity which, on several occasions, endangered my life. In those evil days, San Antonio was swarming with adventurers from every quarter of the globe. Many a noble heart grasped the sword in the defence of the liberty of Texas, cheerfully pouring out their blood for our cause, and to them everlasting public gratitude is due; but there were also many bad men, fugitives from their country, who found in this land an open field for their criminal designs.

San Antonio claimed then, as it claims now, to be the first city of Texas; it was also the receptacle of the scum of society. My political and social situation brought me into continual contact with that class of people. At every hour of the day and night, my countrymen ran to me for protection against the assaults or exactions of those adventurers. Some times, by persuasion, I prevailed on them to desist; some times, also, force had to be resorted to. How could I have done otherwise? Were not the victims my own countrymen, friends and associates? Could I leave them defenceless, exposed to the assaults of foreigners, who, on the pretext that they were Mexicans, treated them worse than brutes. Sound reason and the dictates of humanity would have precluded a different conduct on my part.

In 1840, General Canales, who was at the head of a movement in favor of the federation, in the States of Tamaulipas, Nueva Leon and Coahuila, after having been routed by the Mexican forces, sought refuge in San Antonio. There he endeavored to raise companies of volunteers, to renew the struggle, and requested me to join him in the enterprise. I promised him my co-operation, provided I could procure the consent of General Lamar, then President of the Republic. Canales proceeded to the Capital and Galveston, and succeeded in raising some companies,



with which he went to Mexico to carry out his designs. In the meantime, I had an interview with the President, who not only authorized me to raise volunteers, but, ordered that I should be supplied with arms from the armories of Texas. General Lamar yielded to my request with evident satisfaction, as he thought and declared that any movement against the tyrannical government then existing in Mexico would be promotive of the independence of Texas.

I recruited my men and marched to Mexico, but on reaching the frontier, I heard that Canales was in treaty with Arista, thus putting an end to the revolutionary attempt. One of the articles of the treaty, stated that Mexico should pay for the services rendered by the volunteers. At the request of the officers and men of my brigade, I went to Monterey to receive the money due them. But on my arrival at Monterey, Arista refused to pay me, alleging that he had to take advice in the city of Mexico.

Fully aware that his only object was to seek for a pretext to reject our claims, and withhold payment, I determined to return to Texas.

Immediately after my return, I went to the capital to report to the President the result of the expedition.

In the same year, Don Rafael Uribe, of Guerrero, passed through San Antonio, on his way to the capital, as bearer of a secret communication from General Arista to the President of Texas. Señor Uribe requested me to accompany him. I attended at several interviews between that gentleman and the President, and found out that Arista's intention was to have an understanding with the Executive of Texas, to the effect of pursuing the Indians, who committed depredations on both frontiers.

In fitting out my expedition to assist the Federalists, I contracted some money obligations which it was necessary

to comply with. Availing myself of offers made by Señor Uribe, I entered with him into a smuggling operation. For this object, Messrs. Ogden and Howard gave me a credit of \$3000, on a mortgage on part of my property.

The President having appointed Messrs. Van Ness and Morris to treat upon the subject of Uribe's mission; in their company, and that of Messrs. Blo, Davis, Murphy, Ogden, and Chevallie, I proceeded on a trip to Mexico. When Arista was apprised of our arrival at Guerrero, he made a good deal of fuss to exculpate himself in the eyes of his government. He ordered his forces to march from Matamoras to San Fernando, and issued orders to the effect that all the Americans at Guerrero should proceed to Monterey, but that I should remain at Guerrero. Chevallie, who was sick of the fever, had to remain with me until the return of our associates.

Arista having ordered us to leave the country without delay, I was compelled to leave my goods on consignment to be disposed of. When I heard that they had been sold, I sent Chevallie with some men of San Antonio to the place appointed by my agent, to receive the proceeds of the sale, but the agent not having shown himself, Chevallie returned to San Antonio empty handed. Shortly afterwards, an American, who came from Mexico, informed me that a certain Calvíllo, who was on the look out for smugglers, had seized upon my money.

1842. After the retreat of the Mexican army under Santa Anna, until Vasquez' invasion in 1842, the war between Texas and Mexico ceased to be carried on actively. Although open commercial intercourse did not exist, it was carried on by smuggling, at which the Mexican authorities used to wink, provided it was not carried on too openly, so as to oblige them to notice it, or so extensively as to arouse their avarice.

In the beginning of this year, I was elected Mayor of San Antonio. Two years previously a gunsmith, named Goodman, had taken possession of certain houses situated on the Military Plaza, which were the property of the city. He used to shoe the horses of the volunteers who passed through San Antonio, and thus accumulated a debt against the Republic, for the payment of which he applied to the President to give him possession of the buildings referred to, which had always been known as city property.

The board of Aldermen passed a resolution to the effect, that Goodman should be compelled to leave the premises; Goodman resisted, alleging that the houses had been given to him by the President, in payment for public services. The Board could not, of course, acknowledge in the President any power to dispose of the city property, and consequently directed me to carry the resolution into effect. My compliance with the instructions of the Board caused Goodman to become my most bitter and inveterate enemy in the city.

The term for the mortgage that Messrs. Ogden and Howard held on my property, had run out. In order to raise money and comply with my engagements, I determined to go to Mexico for a drove of sheep. But fearful that this new trip would prove as fatal as the one already alluded to, I wrote to General Vasquez, who was then in command of the Mexican frontier, requesting him to give me a pass. The tenor of Vasquez' answer caused me to apprehend that an expedition was preparing against Texas, for the following month of March.

I called a session of the Board of Aldermen, (of which the Hon. S. A. Maverick was a member,) and laid before them the communication of General Vasquez, stating, that according to my construction of the letter we might soon expect the approach of the Mexicans.

A few days afterwards, Don José Maria García, of Laredo, came to San Antonio; his report was so circumstantial, as to preclude all possible doubts as to the near approach of Vasquez to San Antonio.

Notice was immediately sent to the Government of the impending danger. In the various meetings held to devise means of defence, I expressed my candid opinion as to the impossibility of defending San Antonio. I observed, that for myself, I was going to the town of Seguin, and advised every one to do the same.

On leaving the city, I passed through a street where some men were making breast-works; I stated to them that I was going to my ranch, and thence to Seguin, in case the Mexican forces should take possession of San Antonio.

From the Nueces river, Vasquez forwarded a proclamation by Arista, to the inhabitants of Texas. I received at my ranch, a bundle of those proclamations, which I transmitted at once to the Corporation of San Antonio.

As soon as Vasquez entered the city, those who had determined upon defending the place, withdrew to Seguin. Amongst them were Dunn and Chevallie, who had succeeded in escaping from the hands of the Mexicans, into which they had fallen while on a reconnoitering expedition on the Medina.

The latter told me that Vasquez and his officers stated that I was in favor of the Mexicans; and Chevallie further added, that, one day as he was talking with Vasquez, a man, named Sanchez, came within sight, whereupon the General observed: "You see that man! Well, Colonel Seguin sent him to me, when he was at Rio Grandè. Seguin is with us." He then drew a letter from his pocket, stating that it was from me. Chevallie asked to be allowed to see it, as he knew my handwriting; but the General refused and cut short the interview.

On my return to San Antonio, several persons told me that the Mexican officers had declared that I was in their favor. This rumor, and some threats uttered against me by Goodman, left me but little doubt that my enemies would try to ruin me.

Some of the citizens of San Antonio had taken up arms in favor of the enemy. Judge Hemphill advised me to have them arrested and tried, but as I started out with the party who went in pursuit of the Mexicans, I could not follow his advice.

Having observed that Vasquez gained ground on us, we fell back on the Nueces river. When we came back to San Antonio, reports were widely spreading about my pretended treason. Captain Manuel Flores, Lieutenant Ambrosio Rodriguez, Matias Curbier, and five or six other Mexicans, dismounted with me to find out the origin of the imposture. I went out with several friends, leaving Curbier in my house. I had reached the Main Plaza, when several persons came running to inform me, that some Americans were murdering Curbier. We ran back to the house, where we found poor Curbier covered with blood. On being asked who assaulted him, he answered, that the gunsmith Goodman, in company with several Americans, had struck him with a rifle. A few minutes afterwards, Goodman returned to my house, with about thirty volunteers, but, observing that we were prepared to meet them, they did not attempt to attack us. We went out of the house and then to Mr. Guilbeau's, who offered me his protection. He went out into the street, pistol in hand, and succeeded in dispersing the mob, which had formed in front of my house. Mr. John Twohig offered me a shelter for that night; on the next morning, I went under disguise to Mr. Van Ness' house; Twohig, who recognised me in the street, warned me to "open my eyes." I remained



one day at Mr. Van Ness'; next day General Burleson arrived at San Antonio, commanding a respectable force of volunteers. I presented myself to him, asking for a Court of Inquiry; he answered, that there were no grounds for such proceedings. In the evening I went to the camp, and, jointly with Colonel Patton, received a commission to forage for provisions in the lower ranchos. I complied with this trust.

I remained, hiding from rancho to rancho, for over fifteen days. Every party of volunteers en route to San Antonio, declared, "they wanted to kill Seguin." I could no longer go from farm to farm, and determined to go to my own farm and raise fortifications, &c.

Several of my relatives and friends joined me. Hardly a day elapsed without receiving notice that a party was preparing to attack me; we were constantly kept under arms. Several parties came in sight, but, probably seeing that we were prepared to receive them, refrained from attacking. On the 30th of April, a friend from San Antonio sent me word that Captain Scott, and his company, were coming down by the river, burning the ranchos on their way. The inhabitants of the lower ranchos called on us for aid against Scott. With those in my house, and others to the number of about 100, I started to lend them aid. I proceeded, observing the movements of Scott, from the junction of the Medina to Pajaritos. At that place we dispersed, and I returned to my wretched life. In those days I could not go to San Antonio without peril of my life.

Matters being in this state, I saw that it was necessary to take some step which would place me in security, and save my family from constant wretchedness. I had to leave Texas, abandon all, for which I had fought and spent my fortune, to become a wanderer. The ingratitude of those, who had assumed to themselves the right of

convicting me ; their credulity in declaring me a traitor, on mere rumors, when I had to plead in my favor the loyal patriotism with which I had always served Texas, wounded me deeply.

But, before leaving my country, perhaps for ever, I determined to consult with all those interested in my welfare. I held a family council. All were in favor of my removing for some time to the interior of Texas. But, to accomplish this, there were some unavoidable obstacles. I could not take one step, from my ranch towards the Brazos, without being exposed to the rifle of the first person who might meet me for, through the whole country, credit had been given to the rumors against me. To emigrate with my family was impossible, as I was a ruined man; from the time of the invasion of Santa Anna and our flight to Nacogdoches; furthermore, the country of the Brazos was unhealthier than that of Nacogdoches, and what might we not expect to suffer from disease in a new country, and without friends or means.

Seeing that all these plans were impracticable, I resolved to seek a refuge amongst my enemies, braving all dangers. But before taking this step, I sent in my resignation to the Corporation of San Antonio, as Mayor of the city, stating to them, that, unable any longer to suffer the persecutions of some ungrateful Americans, who strove to murder me, I had determined to free my family and friends from their continual misery on my account, and go and live peaceably in Mexico. That for these reasons I resigned my office, with all my privileges and honors as a Texan.

I left Bexar without any engagements towards Texas ; my services paid by persecutions, exiled and deprived of my privileges as a Texan citizen, I was in this country a being out of the pale of society, and when she could not

protect the rights of her citizens, they were privileged to seek protection elsewhere. I had been tried by a rabble, condemned without a hearing, and consequently was at liberty to provide for my own safety.

I arrived at Laredo, and the Military Commander of that place put me in prison, stating, that he could not do otherwise, until he had consulted with General Arista, whom he advised of my arrest. Arista ordered that I should be sent to Monterey. I arrived in that city, and earnestly prayed the General to allow me to retire to Saltillo, where I had several relatives who could aid me. General Arista answered, that, as he had informed Santa Anna of my imprisonment, he could not comply with my request. Santa Anna directed, that I should be sent to the City of Mexico, but Arista, feeling for my unfortunate position, interceded with him in my behalf, to have the order revoked. The latter complied, but on condition, that I should return to Texas, with a company of explorers, to attack its citizens, and, by spilling my blood, vindicate myself.

By orders of General Arista, I proceeded to Rio Grande, to join General Woll, who told me, that Santa Anna, by his request, had allowed me to go with him, in his expedition to Texas, but, I should receive no command until my services proved if I were worthy.

I started with the expedition of General Woll. In the vicinity of San Antonio, on the 10th of September, I received an order to take a company of Cavalry, and keep the outlets of the city. By this order the city was blockaded, and consequently it was difficult for any person to escape. When I returned from complying with this order, at dawn of day, the General determined to enter the city with the Infantry and Artillery. I was sent to the vanguard, with orders to take possession of the Military Square at all hazards. I entered the Square without opposition, and

shortly afterwards the firing commenced on the Main Square. John Hernandez came out of Goodman's shop, with a message from him to the effect, that, if I would pardon him for what he had done against me, he would leave his place of concealment and deliver himself up. I sent him word, that I had no rancor against him. He delivered himself up, and I placed him under the special charge of Captain Leal. Those who had made some show of resistance in the Main Square surrendered, and the whole city was in the possession of General Woll.

Next day, I was ordered, with 200 men, to take the Gonzales road, and go near that town. On the Cibola I divided my forces, sending a portion up the creek, another down the creek, and with the main body proceeded on the Gonzales road. Next day, these parties joined the main body. Lieutenant Carvajal, who commanded one of the parties, reported, that he had killed, in the Azufrosa, three Texans, who would not surrender.

I returned to San Antonio. A party of Texans appeared by the Garita road, and the troops were put under arms. The General took one hundred Infantry, the Cavalry under Montero, and one piece of artillery, and proceeded towards the Salado. The General ordered 100 Presidiales to attack. The commander of those forces sent word that the enemy were in an advantageous position and that he required reinforcements. The answer of the General was, to send me with orders "to attack at all hazards." I obeyed; on the first charge, I lost 3 killed and 8 wounded, on the second, 7 killed and 15 wounded; I was preparing for a third charge, when Colonel Carrasco came to relieve me from my command. I returned to the side of the General, made my report, whereupon he ordered the firing to cease.

A new attack was preparing, when the attention of

the General was called to some troops on our rear-guard. The aids reported them to be enemies, and near at hand. Colonel Montero was ordered, with his cavalry, to attack them. He called on them, to surrender to the Mexican Government, they answered with scoffing and bantering. Montero formed his dragoons, the Texans commenced firing, killing two soldiers; Montero dismounted his troops, also began firing, and sent for more ammunition. The General angrily sent him a message, asking, whether his dragoons had no sabres or lances. Before Montero received this answer, he had charged, sabre in hand, ending the engagement in a few minutes; only some ten or fifteen Texans survived. During this time, I remained by the side of General Woll, and was there when Montero made his report and brought in the prisoners.

At dusk, the troops received orders to return to San Antonio. In accordance with his orders, not to remain over a month on this side of the Rio Grande, General Woll begun his retreat by the road he came.

The families, who left San Antonio, were put under my charge, and, consequently, I was not in the affair of "Arroyo Hondo."

## REMARKS.

After the expedition of General Woll, I did not return to Texas till the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. During my absence nothing appeared that could stamp me as a traitor. My enemies had accomplished their object; they had killed me politically in Texas, and the less they spoke of me, the less risk they incurred of being exposed in the infamous means they had used to accomplish my ruin.

As to my reputed treason with Vasquez, when we consider that Don Antonio Navarro and I were the only Mexi-



cans of note, in Western Texas, who had taken a prominent part in the war, the interest the Mexican General had in causing us to be distrusted, will be seen. Mr. Navarro was then a prisoner; I alone remained; and if they were able to make the Texans distrust me, they gained a point. This is proved by the fact, that, since I withdrew from the service, there was never seen a regiment of Mexico-Texans. The rumor, that I was a traitor, was seized with avidity by my enemies in San Antonio. Some envied my military position, as held by a *Mexican*; others found in me an obstacle to the accomplishment of their villainous plans. The number of land suits which still encumbers the docket of Bexar county, would indicate the nature of these plans, and any one, who has listened to the evidence elicited in cases of this description, will readily discover the base means adopted to deprive rightful owners of their property.

But, returning again to the charge of treason, if I had sold myself to Mexico, the bargain would have been naturally with the Government; it would have been the interest of Mexico to keep the secret, and not allow inferior officers to know it. Whilst I enjoyed the confidence of the Texans, I might have been useful in imparting secrets, &c., but as soon as my fellow-citizens distrusted me, I was absolutely useless. And is it not strange that the Mexican officers should have been so anxious to inform the Texans of my treason? General Vasquez merely took out a paper from his pocket, and observed to Chevallie that that was from me; but when the latter desired to see the letter, Vasquez refused to shew it to him.

But I take the expedition of Vasquez to be my best defence. What did Vasquez accomplish in that expedition? The coming into and going out of San Antonio; without taking any further steps. Undoubtedly, if I had been confederated with him, I would have tried to make his expedition

*Incomplete*

something more than a mere military promenade. Far from doing this, however, I presented the letter, which I received from Vasquez, to the corporation of San Antonio; I predicted the expedition, and counselled such steps as I thought should be taken.

And, why, if my treason were so clear, did the patriotic and brave Burleson refuse to subject me to a Court of Enquiry? Undoubtedly, he knew it to be his duty to put me on trial, if the slightest suspicion existed as to my character. He refused, and this proved that Burleson and the superior officers were convinced of the shallowness of the charges against me.

During the electoral campaign, of August, 1855, I was frequently attacked in newspapers, and was styled in some "the murderer of the Salado." As for some time previously I had proposed to publish my memoirs, I thought it useless to enter into a newspaper war, more particularly as the attacks against me were anonymous, and were directed with a venom which made me conclude that I owed them to the malevolence of a personal enemy.

I have related my participation in Woll's expedition and have only to say, that neither I nor any of my posterity will ever have reason to blush for it.

During my military career, I can proudly assert, that I never deviated from the line of duty; that I never shed, or caused to be shed, human blood unnecessarily; that I never insulted, by word or deed, a prisoner; and that, in the fulfilment of my duty, I always drew a distinction between my obligations, as a soldier on the battle-field, and, as a civilized man after it.

I have finished my memoirs; I neither have the capacity nor the desire to adorn my acts with literary phrases. I have attempted a short and clear narrative of my public

life in relation to Texas. I give it publicity, without omitting or suppressing anything that I thought of the least interest, and confidently I submit to the public verdict.

Several of those who witnessed the facts which I have related, are still alive and amongst us; they can state whether I have in any way falsified the record.

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